



## **Using Health Promotion to Teach Asthma Management (FY02-2118)**

### Impact

This initiative significantly decreased emergency room visits for patients that received the asthma self-management training.

### Description

Prior to this initiative, the hospital followed clinical practice guidelines for asthma but provided no formal illness management training for those patients. A patient with a diagnosis of asthma had 1.5 emergency room visits per year, on average. The goal of this initiative was to decrease emergency room visits and improve quality of life by teaching patients ways to manage and prevent asthma symptoms. An education program was developed that included the use of peak flow meters, inhalers, and triggers, as well as one-on-one counseling and the development of care plans.

### Outcomes

Emergency room (ER) visits were decreased by 75% among those patients who attended the asthma management program. Based on the cost avoidance of these ER visits, the Drug Therapy Monitoring Clinic (DTMC) was able to justify hiring another clinical pharmacist and registered nurse to handle the increased load of asthma patients. These new providers will also be used for diabetes education.

### Innovative Features

This initiative used intensive education and one-on-one counseling to teach asthma patients self-management of their condition.

### Lessons Learned

- Command support is imperative for new programs; look for ways to maximize that support. For this project, once the commander assigned the responsibility for teaching the classes to the DTMC and mandated that all asthma patients attend the classes, the formally poorly attended classes filled to the maximum.
- Take time to market your program to other healthcare providers. Getting buy-in from physicians and other providers is extremely valuable, but this process can take longer than expected.